

ABSTRACT OF THE INVENTION

A system for delivering SMS messages to a mobile terminal includes an apparatus and method that deliver the SMS messages either using legacy SMS message formats or data packet formats. Additionally, a connection is created between a message center and a gateway GPRS support node wherein SMS messages may be transmitted to the gateway GPRS support node in a data packet format. To provide this capability, the gateway GPRS support node includes a unique port address for receiving SMS messages and circuitry for processing SMS messages received in a data packet format. A serving GPRS support node is formed to include circuitry for determining whether to transmit the SMS message to the mobile terminal in a data packet format or in a legacy SMS message format. The mobile terminal of the present invention is formed to transmit and receive SMS messages in at least one of a legacy and a data packet format.